

# First Great Western Accounts Payable



“Connect vastly simplified our ordering, approval and invoice authorisation processes. It unblocked the bottlenecks of both information and control between our suppliers, our local sites and SAP Financials”

Mark Tatham

Financial Controller, FGW

“AP transactions are automated. The savings are clear and the reaction of our user community has been fantastic.”

## The Issues

The paper trail between FGW's finance hub in Swindon and the 80+ stations, depots and offices was hugely complex. Local manual procurement led to non-compliance and major management problems.

Authorisations, confirmations, account queries and transaction matching were frequently slow, incomplete and prone to error.

Local purchasing and goods inward activity could not be effectively tracked or managed by the corporate team and paperwork would often be missing.

Those receiving goods were often separate from those who ordered them who, in turn, were distributed around the FGW network.

Missing, unauthorised or unaccounted purchases also meant that disputes with suppliers were at an unacceptably high level.

FGW's finance hub recognised it needed to introduce much greater control over purchasing processes.

### The Issues

- Process bottlenecks
- Mislplaced paperwork
- Difficult administration
- Supplier Disputes
- Unauthorised purchases
- Unaccounted purchases
- Overspend

## The Solution

FGW found the answer with TBI's Connect solutions. Connect was installed to simplify the ordering, approval and invoice authorisation process. FGW no longer have the bottlenecks of information and control with their suppliers. The local sites and the SAP Financials system interact seamlessly:

“I started getting emails from staff and managers saying how pleased they were to get corporate approvals and therefore deliveries more quickly. They really appreciated the simplicity and efficiency of the new system.” - Mark Tatham, FGW's Financial Accounting Manager

Suppliers deliver sales orders directly to FGW sales order processing systems through Connect, speeding up order fulfilment and invoicing. With invoices delivered direct to FGW's SAP Financials system, invoice processing and payment authorisation now takes place within trading terms.

### The Solution

- Bottlenecks removed
- Seamless SAP interaction
- Electronic ordering
- Authorised users only
- Controlled Cost Centres
- Reports
- Management Information

## The Results

The Accounts Payable team now perform an account management role, supporting managers and staff across the business opposed to overseeing the detail of the AP process. Unless there's a complex query, procurement and AP transactions are fully automated. Staff have been released from authorising roles as the system now does this automatically which means more effective staff utilisation and cost savings.

FGW has achieved greater control, visibility and traceability of its financial commitments through real-time management of ordering and accounts payable processes. FGW is now achieving its corporate goal of improved operational performance and frontline service to customers through more effective procurement and Accounts Payable operations.

### The Benefits

- Greater control
- Total visibility
- Total traceability
- Real-time management
- Ordering control
- Low supplier disputes
- Staff cost savings
- Controlled spending

## The Client

First Great Western (FGW) is a UK train operating group, part of First Group Plc, with over 70 local operating sites and depots nationwide. A SAP Financials user, FGW used manual ordering and accounts payable processes to handle in excess of 200,000 trading transactions annually.



Connect Procurement